

In the novel, The Girl who Threw Butterflies, by author Mick Cochrane, Molly faces many challenges that fourteen year old girls should not have to face. Six months prior, her father unexpectedly dies in a fatal car accident. Molly was extremely close with her father; she shared a strong bond with him through their mutual love of baseball. Molly's mother, however, did not understand this strange connection. Since her husband's death, she has become distant from her daughter, even more so than before. Molly can still feel her father's presence, especially when she has a baseball in hand. The everlasting gift that her father provided was the knuckleball pitch he taught her. Ball in hand, Molly decided to try out for the boy's baseball team. Much to her surprise, and everyone else's, she makes the team. She is mocked, at first, for being the only girl on the team, but she realizes that her gift is special and connects her dad to her passion. Molly grows emotionally throughout the story, making it very relatable to middle school students.

This novel would be great for middle school students to delve into. Molly is at an age that the readers could easily relate to. She also undergoes problems that other students her age would understand, such as the loss of a parent or feeling like an outcast by one's peers. She is a brave young adolescent that could be seen as a role model to her readers; she stands up for what she believes in and follows her dreams. I would absolutely use this book in my classroom. It has the potential to spark great discussions amongst students and is a book they are easily able to relate to. I would highly recommend this book to readers of all ages.